United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1540
13 December 1993

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Third Committee working group on human rights reaches consensus on draft resolution concerning proposed establishment of United Nations high commissioner for human rights.

+ Security Council, in note issued on Friday, says sanctions imposed against Libya in connection with bombings of Pan Am and UTA planes will not be modified at present time.

+ United Nations receives total of $65 million in assessed contributions from 28 States this month; outstanding contributions now total $1.6 billion.

+ General Assembly reaffirms sovereignty of the Comoros over island of Mayotte; urges France to accelerate negotiations with the Comoros to ensure prompt return of island to that country.

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Consensus has been reached on a draft resolution concerning the proposed establishment of a United Nations high commissioner for human rights, according to the Chairman of the working group discussing that issue in the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural). He announced that the working group, established on 12 November to consider the proposed high commissioner, as well as other aspects of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights, would issue a report containing the consensus text this week.

Also with regard to human rights, the Third Committee will take up a new sub-item entitled "Comprehensive implementation and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action". This year the Committee has discussed a new item on the rights of children who are victims of especially difficult circumstances, including armed conflicts, and it will continue that discussion next year. It will also examine further the implementation of human rights instruments, alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and reports of the special rapporteurs and representatives dealing with this issue.

(more)

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After informal consultations by the Security Council on Friday, the President of the Council issued a statement saying that the sanctions imposed against Libya by resolution 748 (1992) would remain unchanged. The measures, which were imposed in connection with the bombings of Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772, are reconsidered every 120 days or sooner.

The President said that after hearing all the opinions expressed in the course of consultations, he had concluded that there was no agreement that the necessary conditions existed for modifications of the measures.

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Since the beginning of December, 28 States have paid some $65 million in assessed contributions to the regular and peace-keeping budgets of the United Nations, a spokesman for the Organization said today. Outstanding assessed contributions from Member States now total around $1.6 billion.

Fourteen States -- Algeria, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, Ghana, Ireland, Micronesia, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden and the United Kingdom -- were fully paid up on all accounts, the spokesman said. He noted that Canada still owed $183, but added that it consistently paid its assessments in full and on time, and could be considered to have paid in full on the assumption that the question of the outstanding amount would soon settled.

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The General Assembly this morning reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Comoros over the island of Mayotte. By a vote of 91 in favour to 2 against (France, Monaco) with 36 abstentions, it urged France to accelerate its negotiations with the Comoros to ensure the effective and prompt return of the island to that country. The Assembly invited France to honour the commitments it entered into prior to the 22 December 1974 referendum on self-determination of the Comoro archipelago, concerning respect for the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros.

Introducing the text, the representative of the Comoros said Mayotte was an integral part of his country, which had, by referendum, expressed its desire for independence in 1974. France's action, in considering the referendum results in Mayotte in contrast to the overall vote, ignored the principle of the indivisibility of colonial entities, thus violating the Declaration on decolonization. The representative of France said he regretted that the question of Mayotte, which was under French sovereignty, was again being considered by the Assembly. The people of Mayotte had clearly expressed their desire to remain a part of the French Republic. However, he added that dialogue with the Comoros should contribute to a solution of the problem.

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